MISCELLANEOUS.

CORIXA STRIATA, CURTIS.

At the meeting of the British Association in Cambridge, Mr. R. Ball brought under the notice of the Zoological Section the fact, that the *Corixa striata* produced loud sounds while immersed in water: the following is a note since obtained by Mr. Ball from the original observer, which it is trusted will induce those who doubted the accuracy of the observation to experiment and satisfy themselves:—

"At Glasnevin, on the 27th of April 1840, found some of *C. striata*; kept them alive in a bed-room basin for six weeks; frequently heard a noise, and on watching attentively saw one of them stretch its hind-legs straight out from its body and remain quite still, resting with its middle legs on a bit of Utricularia at the bottom of the basin; it then moved the fore-legs rapidly in front of its head and gave three brisk little chirps; very *often* after the chirps it made a noise something like grinding a knife, only *very much* fainter and softer; while doing so it moved its body rapidly from side to side, still keeping the hind-legs stretched out. It very often made the chirps alone; but *not* the grinding noise, I think, without the chirps, either before or after (*mostly* before). The sound may be often heard during the day; the evening seems its favourite time, and frequently during the stillness of night, just before the day begins to break, I have often heard it keeping it up for a long time; still it is *very uncertain*, as it may often be watched for a long time without hearing it. Noise disturbs it very much, as it at once will stop on the *slightest*. Often on placing a candle near it, and remaining *perfectly* still, it has made the sound very merrily: the chirps could be heard *distinctly* in the next room by leaving the doors open, and the other noise at the far end of the room that it was in; of course, by listening attentively. The longest time that both noises lasted was while twenty was counted very fast, though it may be often repeated. *Corixa* is a very pretty insect in the water; it has the appearance as if its head, thorax, and a stripe on each side (and I believe the under-part of its body) was of the purest silvery-light, which has a very pretty effect when kept in a glass vessel, when held to the light, to see it swimming quickly. It catches very rapidly with its fore-legs those little animalculæ (which abound in water that is kept for some time), by rooting very eagerly at the bottom of the vessel amongst the mud and bits of plants. It lays its eggs on Utricularia in June; they are small and white, fixed singly at a little distance from each other on the leaves, and are hatched in about eighteen days, and swim very nimbly. Two of the *Corixa* had a curious red parasite on the upper part of the body under the wings, and one had a *Gordius* or *Filaria*. From May to the middle of June is the best time for hearing them. We got some *Corixa* the last week in September 1845, two of them lived until the 26th of November; during the first three weeks of their confinement they sometimes made a *very faint* noise, but not near so frequent or so *audible* as they make it in early summer.

"Can the striated upper-lip have anything to do with the noise? for certainly, when *Corixa* chirped, it seemed to move rapidly its fore-feet across its forehead; but in the other noise it moved its body from side to side. The head seems to be nearly hollow, and the thorax is so different from other insects, a pin can be easily introduced under it. There are queer little plaits on the under-surface of *Corixa*.

"The grinding sound may be imitated by blowing the breath against the closed teeth, gently shaking the head while doing so.

"When one of the *Corixæ* died, the contents of its body were speedily sucked out by one of its companions.—In August 1844 had some alive, but could not hear any noise from them."

ON THE HABITS OF DISPOTEA—CUP AND SAUCER LIMPETS.

I have recently received from my nephew, Lieut. William Smith of H.M.S. Carysfort, a collection of specimens of *Dispotea*, which show the great changes that shell undergoes according to the form and the position of the body to which it happens to be attached.

No. 1. The most remarkable specimen is more than an inch and a quarter in diameter, which was attached to the inner surface of one of the valves of a *Venus* shell; it is of a white colour with oblique purple-brown rays; the three rays nearest the internal cup are the broadest; the apex is nearly central, slightly twisted from right to left, and not more than five lines high. The darkest rays are towards the umbo of the shell; its surface is covered with distant short tubular spines.

No. 2. is a flat specimen, very like the former, but rather darker and with similar brown rays: the shell is covered with minute, rather crowded spines, but it has had its margin broken, and the part which has been reproduced round the edge to repair the injury is thinner, less convex, and without any spines.

No. 3. is a specimen which was attached to a *Cardium*; it is dark brown, rather thick, very minutely spinulose, much higher than wide at the base, where it is compressed; on the side opposite to the internal appendage are diverging cross-ridges formed by the adaptation of the margin of the shell as it was enlarged to the ribbed surface of the *Cardium*.

No. 4. is very similar to the preceding, and is attached to the outside of one valve of a *Cardita*; it is equally thick, dark brown, and the surface closely spinulose, but the shell is not so much modified by the ribs of the *Cardita*, which only leave marks on the side near the internal appendage; but then the animal, just within the margin of the shell, has removed the ribs from the surface of the bivalve, leaving a white concave ring the shape of the *Dispotea*. It is to be remarked, that in this shell and the variety next to be described, the animal has affixed itself, so that the edge of its shell is quite close to the lower or ventral edge of the bivalve. The greater part of the side of this *Dispotea*, next to the lower side of the bivalve, is occupied by a smaller *Dispotea*, similar in thickness, colour and surface, considering its size, to the one on which it is attached, but